



# Making Progress in Africa: 2000

**A**frica in the year 2000 remains a continent of much promise and tremendous challenges. Economic progress has been realized over recent years, with sophisticated new approaches to trade and investment introduced and accepted. There is a slow but noticeable rise in responsible governance. Nations such as Nigeria have taken the first difficult steps down the road to democracy, and other countries continued to make progress towards democratic consolidation. Africans today are more empowered and are beginning to take responsibility for changes in their communities as a result of their participation in civil society. More Africans practice family planning (resulting in reduced maternal mortality), receive appropriate immunizations, and are aware of the dangers of HIV/AIDS than ever before. Improved agricultural production has ensured greater food security; and successful micro-financing activities have resulted in enhanced enterprise development and employment opportunities. And, as more countries are getting their environmental policies right, people are responding by investing in practices and systems that decrease degradation of the environment and improve livelihoods.

However great the development achievement of recent years, Afri-

cans still face daunting obstacles at the beginning of this new century. Twenty-one of the world's poorest nations are in sub-Saharan Africa. At the current rate of population growth, sub-Saharan Africa's population will grow to more than one billion by the year 2020, despite declining birth-rates and the alarming death rate from AIDS. At the beginning of 1999, nearly 23 million adults and children in sub-Saharan Africa were estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS, accounting for two-thirds of those infected worldwide. Furthermore, economists estimate that the decrease in the labor pool as a result of deaths from AIDS will slow Africa's rate of economic growth by as much as 1.4 percent each year for several decades. Civil conflict and natural disasters still beset the continent; a substantial number of economies are not well positioned to play effective roles in globalization: many women continue to be denied access to health and education opportunities; natural resources continue to be threatened; and debt in sub-Saharan Africa nearly quadrupled in the last 20 years.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to providing Africans the support needed to meet these challenges. This brochure offers an overview of results from USAID's most recent performance review of its programs in Africa. A key lesson learned from this process is the importance of giving development programs the chance and the time needed to demonstrate their potential

benefits and outcomes. Most notably, the success of grassroots programs and activities is a direct outcome of long-term investments that USAID has made in Africa.

USAID continues to respond to Africa's challenges through activities in education, health care, micro-finance, support to agricultural institutions, and so much more. The Agency has led the international fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic, most recently through support for President Clinton's Leadership in Investment in Fighting the Epidemic (LIFE) initiative, a major U.S. government interagency effort. The Africa Trade and Investment Program, the Education for Development and Democracy Initiative, and the Leland Initiative are all working to assist Africans to compete in an increasingly complex global marketplace and information-dependent world.



*A South African HIV/AIDS activist.*

AED file photo

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The high rate of population growth intensifies existing social, political, economic, and environmental pressures. USAID is working with African countries to reduce these pressures through family planning programs, support for girls education, AIDS awareness and education, and training and support for community-based organizations to more effectively manage local natural resources.

Another strong message in evaluating USAID's Africa programs is the importance of developing multi-sectoral programs and cross-sectoral linkages in order to create the most effective programs and obtain broader-based results from limited resources. Activities that reinforced programs in other sectors displayed significant success. This was most evident in the area of democracy and governance, where participatory methods were critical for ensuring success in both education and environmental programs. With the increasing impact of HIV/AIDS on programs in all sectors, there is a need to factor HIV/AIDS-related considerations into the design and implementation of both existing and future programs.

Finally, the necessity of integrating gender into program design, implementation, and monitoring is more apparent than ever. An emphasis on the women of Africa is warranted by the fact that in sub-Saharan Africa women are among the poorest of the poor and by the knowledge that high levels of income disparity inhibit both poverty alleviation and the rate of economic growth.

USAID will continue to work in partnership with Africans to accomplish what both Africans and Americans strive for: a decent life of good health, education, meaningful work, financial stability, peace, and social justice. It can and must be realized on a continent of infinite possibilities.

## Agency Goal: Broad-Based Economic Growth and Agricultural Development

### Economic Growth

#### Recent Trends

Economic stability in Africa has improved, but sub-Saharan Africa has not fully shared in the rebound of the global economy following the worldwide slowdown in 1997-98. Gross domestic product (GDP) in sub-Saharan Africa grew by only 2.2 percent in 1999. This was in part due to a slowdown in South Africa and Nigeria, which together account for almost half of sub-Saharan Africa's GDP. Excluding South Africa and Nigeria, average budget deficits as a share of GDP have been cut by more than one-half since 1993. Inflation rates have been reduced by more than 80 percent since 1994. The long-term trend in exports, which grew at an average annual rate of 4.8 percent during 1990-98, is up. As a result of these trends, economic growth in Africa is projected to recover to over 4 percent in the year 2000, in part due to a rebound in South Africa and Nigeria, and also as a result of continuing strong performance by many smaller countries, including Tanzania and Uganda. Factors that account for improved economic growth in Africa include political, social, and macroeconomic stability, and improved efficiency in resource allocation arising from the economic reform process.

#### USAID's Contributions

The Africa Bureau's economic growth program implements bilateral, regional, and pan-African development programs approximating \$200 million per year. USAID concentrates efforts in four areas that are known to be of primary importance to accelerating economic growth: openness to trade and foreign investment, mobilization of domestic savings and investment, improving the enabling environment for the



Laciné Diané (top, center) and his staff.

### A Furniture Maker in Guinea Discovers the Internet

Lanciné Diané, a furniture maker in Kankan, Guinea, had never been online before, but he had heard enough about the Internet to know that it would be useful to his business, so he became the first subscriber when the Internet came to his town. He taught himself everything that he knows about computers and he was quickly able to find practical uses for the Internet. He keeps up to date in the latest technology in woodworking equipment; he made some purchases online (not an easy task given the limitations to the banking system in upcountry Guinea); and he gets ideas for furniture design from websites in the United States and Europe. USAID's Leland Initiative facilitated the installation of the national Internet gateway in the capital, Conakry, and funded Internet gateway connections for three other cities, including Kankan. —Source: USAID/Guinea website



private sector, and building African capacity, particularly in the above three areas.

As a part of USAID's efforts to increase openness to trade and investment, USAID/Mali has supported market information systems for cereals, livestock, and alternative commodities to expand product and market coverage and to now include

regional and world markets. A network of traders has been created for fostering regional integration and removal of trade barriers.

To increase mobilization of domestic savings and investment, USAID/Uganda worked closely with the Bank of Uganda (BOU) and the Ministry of Finance, protecting the interests of depositors during the closure and liquidation of the Cooperative Bank of Uganda. As a result of the mission's intervention, 15 of the Cooperative Bank's 24 branches were sold to two other viable commercial banks, saving the BOU about \$40 million, which would have had to be repaid to the Cooperative Bank's former depositors.

To improve the private sector, USAID/Tanzania is helping strengthen the legal and regulatory environment to support new and existing businesses. The average number of months required to start business operations has decreased significantly from 22 months in 1998 to 6 months in 1999. USAID/Senegal funded an investors' road map survey. In response to the resulting report's recommendations, the Government of Senegal established a steering committee for procedural and administrative reforms (under the direction of the prime minister), which is examining ways to remove barriers to private investment.

USAID/South Africa has made significant progress in assisting historically disadvantaged South Africans to advance their bids for ownership of state-owned assets and public enterprises, therefore building local capacity. Additionally, USAID's bilateral agreement with the Ministry of Public Enterprises has been refocused on capacity strengthening through skills transfer and technical assistance. This assistance has already helped heighten the profile of privatization in South Africa.

Nevertheless, long-term growth prospects for Africa are clouded by the specter of HIV/AIDS and its negative effects on both the size and quality of the African labor force in the

future. Furthermore, development resources are likely to remain as tight in the future as they have been in the recent past. USAID needs to constantly review economic and political trends both in Africa and in the United States, and to apply the lessons learned concerning what activities and approaches work best.

## **Agriculture**

### **Recent Trends**

Agriculture is still the dominant sector in the vast majority of African countries in terms of employment, earning, GDP, and food security. Since the early 1990s, much of sub-Saharan Africa has seen upward trends in per person foodgrain production. In many parts of Africa, however, agricultural production has been disrupted by internal strife, endemic droughts and floods, poor economic policies, expanding populations, and an increasingly stressed natural resource base. This has resulted in a decline in per capita food production of as much as 15 percent in some areas over the last decade. Soil fertility, measured by annual nutrient depletion, is poor and declining, but the introduction of nitrogen-fixing crops in rotation could have significant impact on soil fertility and food security in the future. Also critical to agricultural growth in Africa is the fact that the continent is still on the periphery of the world agricultural export market, in spite of increases in agricultural trade within Africa.

### **USAID's Contributions**

In African countries where USAID has active agriculture programs, the agricultural production growth rate exceeded population growth last year, thus increasing overall food security and rural incomes. The marked increases that these countries have experienced in productivity are largely

linked to the use of new crop varieties. Improvements in cereal varieties have resulted in faster growing crops (about 3 percent faster) than in other developing countries (1.7 percent).

Many of the Agency's development objectives require USAID programs to address poverty reduction. In Africa, the way to achieve this more effectively and to reach the greatest number of people, especially women and children, is through agriculture. Where there are good markets, effective policies, and sufficient services to farmers, productivity and incomes rise. Mozambique, Uganda, Ghana, Rwanda, Mali, Senegal, and Guinea are among the countries that achieved some of the highest gains in agricultural productivity. In the Upper Valley Program Zone in Mali, farmers and rural households who invested in improved natural resource management practices—which reduce soil erosion, increase soil fertility and moisture, and increase ground cover—saw substantially greater yields, double in some cases. The USAID program there helped restore 34,800 hectares of formerly degraded land to a productive state. In addition, USAID-supported research through the International Fertilizer Development Center is producing promising results in more efficient use of fertilizers and improved soil management practices.

As African governments have gotten out of the business of direct agricultural marketing and production, agricultural associations have filled that role. USAID supports farmers' associations and other community-based organizations through the Africa Food Security Initiative, and has helped them to promote and share agricultural technology through regional commodity networks. These networks help rural farmers and businessmen overcome basic constraints to productivity and income generation. USAID's Africa Revitalization

Program has helped strengthen business skills of rural cooperatives and give rural producers access to commercial credit previously unavailable to them.

Because Africa is such a diverse continent, agricultural research networks help link up country systems. USAID-supported agricultural research networks such as the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in East and Central Africa increase regional collaboration and bring together new or improved high-yield and disease resistant crop varieties to increase production and contribute to greater food security. (See the success story on cassava in Uganda below.)

Investments in smallholder farmers in Africa (most of whom are women) through microenterprise, dairy, and horticulture enterprise projects are proving to be one of the strongest and most effective components in a number of USAID's programs in East Africa.

Challenges that remain for USAID's agriculture programs include: 1) declining soil fertility, especially in "old-soil" areas of Africa such as West Africa; 2) declining food security and nutritional declines in some countries, including Angola, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (areas where USAID does not have strategic objectives in agriculture); 3) the delayed impact of

HIV/AIDS on food security and rural households now becoming apparent; and 4) the competitiveness of African agriculture in growing global markets.

## Agency Goal: Democracy and Good Governance Strengthened

### Recent Trends

The process of democratic development in sub-Saharan Africa experienced both progress and setbacks during the past year. The resumption of hostilities in Sierra Leone, the continuation of the conflict in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the political tensions in Zimbabwe in the run-up to this year's parliamentary elections, combined with the devastating floods in southern Africa (especially in Mozambique), all contributed to the stagnation of democratic progress in many countries. At the same time, there were many notable positive developments. Mali and Benin continued to make progress towards democratic consolidation. Nigeria held democratizing elections, South Africa and Malawi held second round democratic elections, and the opposition in Zimbabwe had a strong showing despite government attempts at intimidation and vote rigging. Finally, early this year, Senegal experienced its first opposition victory in presidential elections since multiple parties were allowed in 1974.

### USAID's Contributions

Looking back over a decade of democracy programming at USAID, it is clear that the Agency's democracy and governance activities are crosscutting in their scope and help sustain achievements in other sectors. However, unless democracy is "relevant to people in their everyday lives," it is unlikely that sustainable political development will flourish in Africa. It is also clear that



### Cassava Recovers in Uganda

More cassava is produced in Africa than anywhere else in the world—80-90 million metric tons annually. With more than 200 million people depending on cassava as their staple food, it is the most important food security crop in sub-Saharan Africa. In Uganda, cassava as a staple food crop is second only to bananas in terms of total production, but it is the most important crop for food security. Between 12 and 15 million people grow cassava in Uganda, on 400,000 hectares of land. Annual production peaked at 3.5 million tons in 1989, until a new and devastating form of cassava mosaic disease struck, reducing national production levels by approximately 40 percent.

It is estimated that between 1992 and 1997, annual losses to Ugandan farmers as a result of cassava mosaic disease were approximately US \$60 million; total losses have exceeded \$400 million in the past 10 years. In addition, the decline in cassava production severely disrupted household food security. Cassava functions as a "food bank" because it is drought-resistant and can be left in the ground for two to three years without being harvested, serving as a bridge when more vulnerable annual crops are not available. In addition to Uganda, the neighboring countries of Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sudan have also been affected by the disease, so Uganda was unable to look to these neighbors to fill the deficit.

USAID and other donors quickly responded to the crisis. In collaboration with the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture and Uganda's National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO), USAID supported basic research, institutional development, and the multiplication and dissemination of disease-resistant cassava planting materials held in reserve by NARO. Over the past 10 years, USAID has invested approximately \$5.3 million, half of the total funds required to combat the decline in cassava production. The return on this investment has been enormous. Cassava production in USAID's target areas increased from less than 1,000 metric tons in 1997, to 342,000 metric tons in 1999, thus greatly increasing the food supply for low income Ugandans. The Kampala wholesale market value of the 1999 crop from these target areas was estimated at over \$40 million, exceeding the amount of USAID's initial investment by 700 percent in this year alone.

—Source: UGANDA FY2002 R4

in societies where people at all levels are active in decision-making, governments are more likely to make decisions that improve the welfare of all citizens.

In the northwestern city of Mahajanga, Madagascar, for example, citizens there discovered that the promise of decentralization—increased citizen participation and government accountability—could be realized through community action. With assistance from USAID's partner PACT, the citizen-led effort called *Rary* ("weaving" in Malagasy) brought together representatives from city government and 23 neighborhood associations to debate the city's controversial new tax plan and to identify the most urgent public issues. Their top priority was access to safe drinking water. Through a series of public meetings, the neighborhood associations successfully negotiated a community-managed water distribution system, which includes a cost-recovery process to ensure that maintenance funds are available. As a result of this effort, the city learned how to involve the public in the municipal budget process and succeeded in increasing its tax recovery rates by more than 50 percent.

Because of the strong relationship between improved governance and improved development conditions, USAID supports democracy programming in virtually every one of its country and regional programs in Africa. Within USAID Missions, cross-sectoral programming that links democracy and governance programs to one or more other development sectors such as education, health, and environment continues to increase. As the availability of funding for democracy and other sectors continues to decline, these innovative approaches will help make the most of resources.

Other notable accomplishments reported by USAID missions sup-



### Sudan's Dinka and Nuer Find Common Ground to End Long-Term Conflict

In March 1999, a USAID-sponsored participatory, grassroots peace process in Sudan brought together more than 300 Dinka and Nuer traditional leaders and church elders, which led to the signing of an historic peace agreement at Wunlit, Bahr el Ghazal. The process for this agreement began in 1998 under the auspices of the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC). Funding from USAID's Greater Horn of Africa Initiative and Sudan Transitional Assistance for Rehabilitation program financed the event as well as follow-on NSCC peace building initiatives.

By telling stories of war and loss from years of cattle raiding and abduction of women and children, the Dinka and Nuer leaders used cattle sacrifice and other traditional ceremonies at the conference to bind their communities to the agreement and end their conflict. The Wunlit Agreement provides for the adjudication of disputes over access rights to pasture and water sources and establishment of border courts and police posts jointly operated by the Dinka and Nuer. Within six months of the signing, five high frequency radio posts were established along the Dinka-Nuer frontier, providing an important means to prevent future conflict.

One of the NSCC's peace mobilizers who played a key role in organizing the peace agreement revisited the site in February 2000 and witnessed how communities empowered by the peace have resumed living as neighbors in areas that had been "no man's land" for more than seven years. He wrote: "I did not see people moving with guns as was the case before the Wunlit Peace Agreement. Amazingly enough, the Nuer displaced people were mixed with local people in a cheerful mood. The Dinka and Nuer children were playing together." (A complete report on this process is available at [www.members.tripod.com/SudanInfonet](http://www.members.tripod.com/SudanInfonet).)

—Source: RESDO/ESA FY2002 R4



*A reunion between family members long separated by the conflict.*

M. duCille/The Washington Post

porting stronger democracy and governance include improvements in the enabling environment for civil society organizations in Ethiopia; greater collaboration between government and civic education leaders to solve community problems in Mali; arbitration of disputes (labor, commercial, and other) in Zambia and South Africa; stronger democratic institutions in Mozambique; and greater inclusion of women and women's issues in political dialogue and action in Namibia and Guinea.

Increasingly, USAID's democracy-related resources are being used to support conflict prevention,

mitigation, and resolution activities. Conflict continues to be one of the greatest challenges to the institutionalization of democratic practices in Africa. Internal conflicts (in Uganda and Angola) and regional conflicts (in the Democratic Republic of Congo) delay political reforms, drain resources, and jeopardize years of development. Improved governance is a key element in the sustainable resolution of these conflicts. USAID secures development investments by promoting alternative dispute resolution and similar innovations alongside more traditional programming like judicial reform and human rights.

Like conflict, corruption undermines political development in Africa by threatening the legitimacy of states. Since in many countries there is only limited political will to attack corruption at the national level, many USAID missions have shifted their approach to support local governments' anti-corruption initiatives. One-quarter of the Africa Bureau's democratic development programs promote transparency and account-

### Mukumela, Adult Learner

Mukumela Ratshitiamba was born 1946 in the Northern Province in South Africa. One of seven children, she never attended school. Neither did her brothers and sisters. She says that learning how to read and write in 1999 was one of the best things she has ever done. Mukumela is part of the adult learning program offered by partner groups from the Department of Education, Project Literacy, and USAID. She sends her own children to school because, as she says, "Life is difficult for me without an education. I want my children to have better opportunities than I've had." Mukumela grows tomatoes, cabbages, and onions. She earns money by making and selling *vetkoeks* (South African pastries) to teenagers at the local school. Mukumela says she doesn't want to work for anybody else, preferring to be self-employed. This attitude is echoed by most of the 125 other adult learners who will benefit further from two skills-training courses offered as the next phase of adult learning in the province. Mukumela looks forward to learning how to better grow and manage agricultural goods to sell in the area. She is also eager to learn marketing principles that will be taught in the small, medium, and micro enterprises course she plans to take. This approach links learning to development and enables participants to achieve meaningful qualifications and income-generating power.

—Source: *South Africa FY2002 R4*



ability in governance, while others focus on improving the regulatory framework and strengthening the oversight capacity of civil society.

Preventing HIV/AIDS and providing support for its victims is becoming an increasingly important component of USAID programs in Africa, including initiatives in the democracy sector. HIV/AIDS has undone decades of development in Africa, and has the potential to destabilize severely affected nations. Donors must act decisively to prevent political breakdown in countries where the human and institutional resources are being seriously depleted.

## Agency Goal: Human Capacity through Education and Training

### Recent Trends

Basic education is the foundation for a society's development. Without it people cannot sustain themselves and their families, provide for their health, work productively, or live culturally and socially enriched lives. Illiteracy excludes people from democratic development and economic development, especially in the context of an increasingly global society.

Research findings over the past 10 years provide clear evidence for these assertions: the economic rate of return for primary education in Africa is 27 percent; farmers who have completed four years of basic education produce 8 percent more than farmers who have not; and basic education provides the knowledge and attitudes leading to better childcare, improved household diets, and better sanitation and health practices. One study indicates that a 10 percent increase in female literacy leads to a 10 percent decline in child mortality.

Although there has been some progress in selected countries in



J. Owen-Rea/USAID Washington

*A teacher and students in South Africa.*

Africa, overall there remains a huge gap between the goal of quality basic education for all and the current status of access to good quality education. More than one-third of Africa's children do not have access to schooling. Girls are more likely to not attend or not continue with school. Only 40 percent of all children ever reach grade five. And national assessments of pupils' learning carried out in some countries revealed that fewer than 25 percent of children making it to grade six have acquired basic literacy and numeracy skills.

### USAID's Contributions

The challenge of expanding quality basic education remains central to USAID's development program in Africa. Overcrowded classrooms; inadequate instructional materials; poorly paid, under trained, and unmotivated teachers; and the tragedy of AIDS are all significant problems that hamper learning for African children. Yet examples of USAID-supported community and school-level improvements and policy-financing frameworks prove that these problems can be solved. Indeed, there are many affordable, effective approaches that enable children to learn.

USAID has learned that results in education depend on a strategy that simultaneously addresses three points: 1) promoting systemic reform rather than working on isolated projects; 2) assuring the sustainability of reform efforts so that countries have the financial and institutional capacity to build on programs started with USAID assistance; and 3) concentrating on developing effective schools and classrooms where children are learning, as the touchstone for overall reform results.

There has been steady progress on incorporating these three points into program design and management in all 11 USAID missions in Africa with basic education programs. Examples include Malawi, where USAID has played a leading role in supporting government-led sector analysis and the formulation of a policy investment framework, and Zambia, where USAID supports an integrated education sector reform program. In both countries, USAID supports specific school and community based reforms that inform the national process.

Mali represents a different approach. USAID has worked with the government of Mali to develop new policies to support community schools. These schools are managed by local communities with the support of NGOs, and provide an alternative to government-run schools, reaching out to under-served areas of the country. Evidence indicates that the schools are effective, especially in reaching girls and poorer communities. The community schools movement has become a major force for education reform within the country, with the number of children served rising from 12,000 in 1995 to 100,000 in 2000, which represents approximately 15 percent of children enrolled in all schools.

USAID also works with governments to develop policies and strategies targeting gender equity, which

seek to enhance girls' access, retention, and performance in basic education. Countries where there is low overall enrollment also tend to have the highest gap between boys' and girls' access to education. It is the low enrollment countries (Benin, Ethiopia, Guinea, and Mali) where increases in girls' access to primary schooling have been most dramatic. In these four countries, there has been an increase of more than 10 percent in girls' enrollment rates over the past five years. In Malawi, girls are now enrolled in near equal numbers with boys. These gains result from increasing public information and awareness of the benefits of education for girls, policy actions by government, and community level interventions supported by USAID.

## Agency Goal: The World's Environment Protected for Long-Term Sustainability

### Recent Trends

Improving stewardship of Africa's rich and vast environmental resources is vital to maintaining a healthy global environment. But decades of centralized management of natural resources failed to halt the degradation and exploitation of the environment. African countries then began to experiment with decentralizing policies, which transferred responsibility for the management of local natural resources to communities and interest groups.

USAID's support for and leadership in natural resources management (NRM) programming has made a vital contribution to sustaining this shift in attitude. For example, since 1990, 18 African countries have made policy changes that devolve authority of the management of local resources. In addition, people in Botswana, Mali, Namibia, Guinea, Zambia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Uganda, and Senegal have benefited from organizational training and

formed community-based organizations that allow them to increase the returns from NRM investments. While the number of people investing in NRM is still too low to meet the current challenge of environmental degradation in Africa, this strong positive trend indicates that USAID-supported programs are on the right path. The challenge has shifted from learning what to do to spreading the lessons learned from successful NRM activities.

### USAID's Contributions

USAID missions across Africa have assisted in establishing conditions that enable broad-based changes in natural resources management to be identified, implemented, and sustained. The challenge is to increase the rate of progress in NRM while there is still a productive base of natural resources left in Africa. But to foster and sustain this increased rate of progress, there must be stronger Africa-based advocacy for NRM activities. There is now more Africa-based advocacy for policy and institutional reforms and self-advocacy in the form of local community-based organizations that take on tenure and local management issues. A natural conclusion is that the more activities that strengthen and support these advocates, the better the prospect for broad-based impacts.

The strongest prospects for future impacts from the Agency's NRM programs are attributable to institutional, policy, and human capacity changes. In Namibia, NRM policy changes devolved natural resources management authority and responsibility to local populations. USAID's Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE) program there has strengthened the institutions responsible for ensuring national-level management of the community-based natural resources management programs and transferred skills to groups learning to effectively man-



## Preserving Madagascar's Biodiversity

In Madagascar, USAID is helping the country figure out how to successfully manage what is one of the earth's top three biodiversity hotspots. Eighty percent of species in Madagascar are found nowhere else on earth. At the same time, USAID is working to improve the livelihoods of Madagascar's population, ranked as the world's 13<sup>th</sup> poorest, many of whom depend upon natural areas for their livelihoods. The results from environmental programs here show that the mission is successfully meeting this challenge. Representative of 94 percent (16 out of 17) of critical habitats now fall within the protected area network (compared to 50 percent in 1996). This represents 1,718,544 hectares or about 8 percent of Madagascar's landmass now under some form of protection (compared to 4.7 percent in 1989).

To complement these protective measures, USAID is helping communities within priority areas to improve their livelihoods through alternatives to slash and burn agriculture and through devolution of forest management authority to local communities. Last year, 222 villages participated in community-based conservation activities (up from 144 in 1997 and 160 in 1998). Results from these activities include increased crop yields (from 10 to 90 percent for rice and 40 to 200 percent for off-season crops), increased revenues, reduced land clearing, and introduction of new crops and varieties. And, in a pioneering move for Madagascar, the Ministry of Water and Forests processed nine contracts transferring management of forest resources to local community associations. Currently, 36 community-based associations are legally registered, increasing the prospects for a rapid increase in community managed forests. USAID further helped Madagascar to link conservation and the private sector through the establishment of two ecotourism investment zones.

—Source: Madagascar FY2002 R4

age local resources. The training that LIFE participants receive to effectively manage organizations, enterprises, and wildlife areas also gives them the skills, self-esteem, and confidence needed to improve their livelihoods, to hold their leaders responsible, and to manage responsibly—all vital elements to growing a prosperous and democratic country.

One of the major lessons from the past 10 to 15 years is that people invest in better natural resources management when it leads to a more secure and prosperous livelihood. Most of USAID's NRM programs in Africa have elements of enterprise management aimed at revenue generation. For example, in the Kukum Forest region in Ghana, income to communities increased from a few thousand dollars in 1992, to over \$250,000 in 1998; communities in Kenya made more than \$1 million from wildlife-based tourism

last year. In Namibia, the 10 areas of land under management by the local population under the LIFE program generated more than \$400,000 last year, nearly double the amount from the previous years, and benefited 26,800 individuals. In Botswana, annual revenue for communities surrounding world famous Chobe National Park went from US \$4,000 to \$176,000 between 1993 and 1999. But in addition to generating greater revenues, all of these NRM programs now rely on more diverse sources of revenue, which is an important factor in any risky environment, given the relative newness of these programs.

Also critical to USAID's environment strategy is the fact that because resources are often shared, increasing population pressure must be a part of NRM's evolving context. The Agency's experience has shown that when population pressure

increases, intensified management of resources is the appropriate response. Because of this, USAID has positioned itself to work in areas experiencing increased population and resource pressure.

## Agency Goal: World Population Stabilized and Human Health Protected

### Child Survival and Maternal Health

#### Recent Trends

Trends in maternal and child health in parts of sub-Saharan Africa continue to be troubling. Several countries experienced increases in under-five mortality levels toward the end of the 1990s. In Kenya, full vaccination coverage fell from 79 percent in 1993 to 65 percent in 1998, and in Madagascar, rates fell from 43 to 36 percent over a similar period. Malaria remains one of the key child killers in Africa; in some countries malaria-related deaths contribute to 25 percent of under-five mortality. HIV/AIDS continues to have an adverse impacts on children, increasing mortality rates by as much as 20 percent. Additionally, more than 30 percent of all children born to HIV-infected mothers in Africa will themselves become HIV-infected. Maternal health statistics are also still cause for concern. In West Africa, 1 in 12 women dies due to pregnancy-related causes; for Africa overall, this number is 1 in 16.

#### USAID's Contributions

In spite of these negative trends in maternal and child health, USAID has achieved many positive results through its programs. Some of the ways in which USAID missions are working to reverse these trends are through programs focusing on decentralization, health sector financing, human resources management, access to health facilities, drug resistance, and targeting mother to

child transmission of HIV/AIDS. USAID's Infectious Disease Initiative is aimed at reducing the threat of infectious diseases worldwide. In Africa funds from this initiative support country-level activities, regional capacity building, and research.

National immunization days were conducted in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa last year. In Mozambique, nearly 4 million children, 97 percent of children between ages 6 and 59 months, were vaccinated during campaigns conducted by the Ministry of Health. For the first time, this campaign also provided vitamin A supplements. In Zambia, the campaign held in 34 districts reached 96 percent of eligible children with oral polio vaccine. In urban districts, a measles vaccination coverage rate of 81 percent was achieved. The district health management teams, with only US \$500 seed money per district, initiated vitamin A distribution at the time of routine care visits and achieved results comparable to earlier, more costly campaign-style activities.

To assist malaria interventions in Ghana, USAID supported capacity-building activities within the Ministry of Health's disease surveillance program. In addition, USAID sponsored the creation of demand for insecticide-treated netting, which is led by the Ghana Social Marketing Foundation.

In an effort to improve the management of preventative health programs in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Kinshasa School of Public Health trained an additional 25 district and zone health personnel at the master's degree level. These staff were then assigned to rural areas.

USAID/Guinea undertook micronutrient activities at the community level through a community-based nutrition activity known as "Hearth," which targets mothers of malnourished children under age 3

and teaches them how to help their children attain healthy weights. As a result, mothers increased their knowledge about nutrition, and 82 percent of participating children achieved healthy weight levels.

## HIV/AIDS

### Recent Trends

The continent's greatest threat comes from the burgeoning HIV/AIDS pandemic. With 23.3 million of the world's known 33.6 million people with HIV/AIDS living in Africa, and over 5,000 deaths from AIDS there each day, economic, social, and democratic gains are now seriously compromised. Throughout Africa, life expectancy and population growth rates are falling, and the ratio of active adults to dependents is drastically altering for the worse. Among the hardest hit countries, Botswana had an infection rate of 35.8 percent in 1999—more than one third of its population. It is also one of three countries projected to have a negative population growth rate in the next decade as a result of HIV/AIDS, along with South Africa and Zimbabwe. There are glimmers of hope, however. In Zambia, prevalence rates among youths aged 15-19 in a few urban sites declined from 28 to 15 percent between 1993 and 1998. South Africa and Kenya both demonstrated rate stabilization in selected areas. Rates in Uganda also continue to decline, although a reversal was reported at one site.

### USAID's Contributions

HIV/AIDS has been declared a United States national security concern. The Leadership

and Investment in Fighting the Epidemic (LIFE) initiative, launched in 1999, is the newest weapon in USAID's anti-HIV/AIDS arsenal. The initiative marks a critical turning point in the United States' commitment to fighting the disease, doubling the resources available for HIV/AIDS in 15 sub-Saharan countries. It emphasizes education and awareness programs, along with multi-sectoral strategies, which continue to be the most effective approaches.

In Zimbabwe, six USAID-sponsored voluntary counseling and testing centers opened in September 1999. By December of that year, over 2,000 clients had been tested and counseled. Additionally, a major national AIDS policy was launched, which included an "AIDS levy," a 3 percent tax on earned income to finance HIV/AIDS-related activities.

A USAID-funded project in Rwanda continued to improve the quality of service delivery by strengthening the capacity of regional and health district teams to integrate and implement STI/HIV clinical and education services. A recent evaluation of STI (sexually transmitted infection) case management estimated that 84 percent of cases at health centers were now being correctly diagnosed and managed, compared to 67 percent in 1997.

Increased demand for prevention and mitigation of HIV/AIDS in South



An HIV/AIDS peer counselling group in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

USAID/DRC

Africa is evidenced by the USAID-funded AIDS toll-free helpline. This is a major attempt to improve knowledge and behavior change. There has been a significant shift in the number and types of questions handled by the helpline. Previously, questions were of a superficial nature. Now they are increasingly about care, counseling, testing, and management.

Broadly speaking, USAID programs in Africa focused on STI/HIV/AIDS have been able to achieve increased political commitment, an environment of reduced stigma, and greater capacity building among local NGOs. Future directions include scaling up successful inter-

ventions, increasing support for countries that currently have low prevalence rates, and targeting high risk groups and areas.

## Population and Family Planning

### Recent Trends

At current rates of population growth, sub-Saharan Africa will grow to over one billion people by 2020, despite declining birthrates and an increasing number of deaths from AIDS. The rate of modern contraceptive prevalence among married women, while increasing over the last few years, is only 13 percent, compared with 40 percent in North

Africa, and 59 percent in Latin America. Nonetheless, there continue to be important successes. In Kenya, the decline in fertility continued; since 1976, the total fertility rate has fallen from 8.1 to 4.7 births per woman. In Zimbabwe, modern contraceptive use among married women has increased steadily in the last five years from 42 percent in 1994 to 50 percent in 1999.

### USAID's Contributions

The high rate of population growth intensifies existing social, political, economic, and environmental pressures. USAID assists African countries to reduce these pressures through family planning programs that emphasize healthier, smaller families. USAID programs focused on activities that promote the adoption of policies and strategies that address the needs of underserved populations (adolescents and males), improve urban reproductive health services, integrate STI/HIV/AIDS programs with other reproductive health services, improve reproductive health logistics management systems, and empower women to take control of their reproductive health.

USAID's family planning programs are succeeding and results from activities in sub-Saharan Africa show that fertility is decreasing, and contraceptive use and the demand for family planning is increasing.

During 1999, USAID/Mozambique's expansion of family planning (FP) services exceeded expectations. By the end of the year, 150 health posts in an area were providing FP services, nearly double the number operating in 1998. The FP project in Nigeria is also making progress in increasing the number of sites where modern contraceptives are available. The number of community-based distributors increased 14 percent from 1998, and the number of sites offering clinical services increased 27 percent.

In Tanzania, the training of health workers in integrated reproductive



## Polio Eradication Program in Liberia

Immunization coverage in Liberia had become extremely low, partly due to its seven-year civil war. This included vaccination against polio, a disease that the World Health Organization (WHO) has targeted for eradication early in the first decade of this century. In 1998, less than 40 percent of prewar health facilities were functional and the coverage of the protective third dose of oral polio vaccine was estimated at only 19 percent.

Liberia, along with 13 other African countries, received funding for selected components of the action plans for National Immunization Days (NID) for the Global Eradication of Polio. In 1998, USAID provided a grant to support the WHO's regional Africa Polio Eradication Initiative in Liberia, which strengthens routine immunization services by developing sustainable immunization and disease control programs.

Liberia's first and second year NID for polio eradication were conducted in January and February of 1999, and January through March of 2000, respectively. During the first year, a total of 524,593 children below 5 years of age were targeted for polio immunization. The average coverage rate for the targeted population during Liberia's first NID was actually greater than 100 percent (118 percent); official population estimates often do not include refugees and internally displaced persons and are therefore lower than the real figures. During the second year, a total of 690,936 children below 5 years of age were targeted for polio immunization, an increase of 32 percent as compared to the target population for the 1999 NID, with an average coverage rate again exceeding the estimated target population.

The high level of political commitment by the government was one of the contributing factors that led to the success. The president of Liberia officially launched the Polio Eradication Program and organized an inter-ministerial committee to support the implementation of the National Immunization Days. The president further appealed to all government ministries and agencies, NGOs, political and civil leaders—including county superintendents, chiefs, religious leaders, and traditional leaders—to actively participate in the planning and implementation of the NID campaigns. A presidential proclamation declared the first day of the first and second rounds of NID a public holiday, making it easier for mothers and caretakers to bring their children to the various vaccination sites.

—Source: *Liberia FY2002 R4*

health was successfully retargeted to the rural health facilities that demonstrated the largest need. This change led to a significant increase in the percentage of government facilities with a trained service provider—from 59 percent in 1996 to 72 percent in 1999.

To continue these successes, USAID needs to maintain its commitment to family planning programs and expand them where possible. Financial resources need to be increased beyond USAID alone by leveraging other donors and governments, and by encouraging client cost recovery. Local capacity building exercises are particularly important for sustainability.

## Integrating Gender into USAID Programming

### Recent Trends

Africa's women and girls remain, by and large, under-represented and sidelined. Indeed, one can argue that the unfulfilled development potential in Africa results in part from the failure to include and encourage women in decision-making processes. For example, a World Bank estimate suggests that education for female farmers in Kenya could increase crop yields by as much as 24 percent. Also, sub-Saharan African countries that do not send enough girls to school have gross national products 25 percent lower than those that do.

It is encouraging, therefore, to note that many innovative activities are underway in USAID missions and regional centers in Africa to assist women in overcoming cultural, political, and economic barriers so they can participate in all sectors of society and benefit fully from development gains.

### USAID's Contributions

Because of the crosscutting nature of gender, taking advantage of synergies between activities in more



### Lifting Women Out of Poverty: PRIDE/Finance on the Ground

The best local rice dishes and cold drinks in Mamou are said to be found at *Le Golf*, a restaurant run by Madame Mariama Bah that attracts locals and expatriates alike. Madame Bah was able to make the restaurant profitable by obtaining a small loan of US \$150.00 from PRIDE/Finance, a successful micro-finance institution supported by USAID/Guinea.

Back in 1992, Madame Bah enjoyed only modest success as a seamstress with a very small restaurant. When she heard about PRIDE, she got together with a group of unemployed friends to secure a group loan. "Thanks to the training I received, I was able to make my businesses successful." She reinvested in her restaurant by buying bigger pots and pans to serve more customers, and a freezer for food storage. She has also turned her modest sewing business into an active sewing school.

Madame Bah has since graduated to higher-value individual loans from PRIDE. She has also paid to take PRIDE/Formation's (the "sister NGO" of PRIDE/Finance) continuing education course called the Spirit of Entrepreneurship on reinvestment and business diversification. Her latest project is a video store next door to her restaurant, which will open up later this year.

The added income from businesses is helping her and her husband, a school teacher, put all eight of her children through school. Her goal is to get them all through high school, and hopefully beyond. "My children aren't in the business—they're in school where they belong."

—by Laura Lartigue for USAID/Guinea



Mariam Bah at her restaurant.

L. Lartigue/USAID Guinea

than one development sector is critical. USAID/Benin, for instance, has forged linkages between democracy and governance and basic education programs. As part of the effort to increase girls' school enrollment, the mission focused on increasing community involvement in local schools. At the same time, the democracy and governance program's decentralization activities promoted local involvement in issues such as school management. By creating a synergy between the two programs, the mission not only increased their effectiveness, but also showed how targeting girls' education has implications that go beyond enrollment rates.

Under the Community School Grants Program (CSGP), USAID/Ethiopia has assisted 1,200 schools in improving basic education. For Ethiopian girls, this means not only better schools but also more opportunities. By targeting girls' enrollment, CSGP schools in 1999 had a girls' enrollment rate of nearly 52 percent, significantly higher than the 1995 national average of less than 20 percent. Girls also benefit because CSGP schools have lower dropout and repetition rates, which means that girls receive a better education and stay in school longer.

In 1999, USAID's Regional Center for Southern Africa worked on mainstreaming gender into its

democracy activities by supporting organizations that promote women's empowerment. For example, the University of Cape Town Labor Law Unit (UCTLLU) in South Africa insisted on equal representation of women in its conflict resolution training courses. As a result, women now serve as paralegals, conciliators, and industrial relations court staff and arbitrators in the union movement. UCTLLU has also helped reorient the labor agenda to include gender equity concerns.

Enhanced economic activity is crucial for Africa's women and their families. USAID missions in Africa support activities encompassing income-earning opportunities and women's access to microcredit schemes, technology, markets, and training. The USAID-funded Sesame Growers Association Project (SGA) in The Gambia focuses on increasing the economic benefits of sesame to female farmers through greater production, processing, and market-

ing of sesame. As a result of this project, in 1999 sesame production by SGA members increased by 76 percent over 1998 levels, and the total value of production increased by 154 percent. Equally important is the crop's gender impact. Since women are the main producers, processors, and marketers, the production of sesame enhanced their economic and social status. Although USAID no longer maintains an office in The Gambia, positive results of this project continue.

USAID missions in Africa have a particularly strong emphasis on women and health. High rates of population growth and infant mortality have required significant attention, and most USAID health interventions concentrate on the role women play as mothers and caregivers, as well as the impact of HIV/AIDS. USAID/Tanzania, for instance, is targeting the difference between women and men concerning condom use in AIDS prevention. Studies

show that the number of Tanzanians who reported using a condom during the last sexual encounter with a nonregular partner rose from 15 to 23 percent for women and 26 to 32 percent for men. To address the programmatic gender differences, the mission has started a pilot project marketing the female condom. Overall, the contraceptive prevalence rate has increased from 6 percent in 1991 to over 15 percent in 1999.

Integrating gender into development and humanitarian assistance activities is a crucial part of achieving goals and reaching new targets. The effort is not just a matter of including women but understanding their roles and how these roles are essential for positive and long-term change. USAID missions in Africa are continuing their efforts to improve the welfare of target countries through a commitment to gender integration.



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